

# Spotlight On: POLLINATORS!



## Bring the Excitement of Pollinators to Your Visitors!

The intricate relationship between plants and the animals that pollinate them is fascinating and complex. Far from simple flowers attracting a butterfly or a bee, plant pollination is key to the very survival of the planet!

**Spotlight On: POLLINATORS!** is a temporary installation suitable for zoos, conservatories, butterfly exhibit enclosures, arboretums, or other all-weather installations. Built to withstand wind, rain and sun, reading rails accompany greatly magnified pollinator pairings as custom graphic panels to create a unique addition to your visitors' experience.



## Honeybees and More

Did you know that there are more than 4,000 native bee species in the United States? Or that these native species perform more pollination than our iconic friend the honey bee? Or that moths, beetles, and even flies have a part to play in the pollination game?

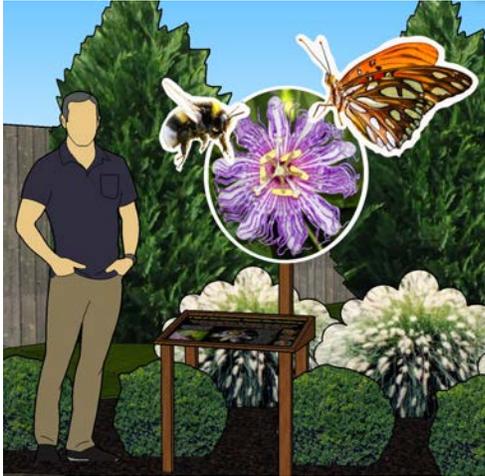
And when it comes to the plants and their blossoms, their evolutionary stories are complex and fascinating. Did you know that flower shapes have evolved specifically to be as successful as possible at depositing pollen grains on their pollinators? Their sugary nectar is only there to attract them. Those pollen grains are the real story.

**Spotlight On Pollinators** presents these complex topics in simple terms in a colorful, engaging way.



Pollinator Spotlight Pairing and Reading Rail

## Exhibit Design Details



Custom graphic panels are a layered graphic presentation, featuring pollinators atop their chosen flower blossom. Intended to be installed within garden beds or along a garden pathway, these eye-catching graphic panels draw the visitor in for a closer look. Supportive interpretive information is at the ready in accompanying graphic panel reading rails.

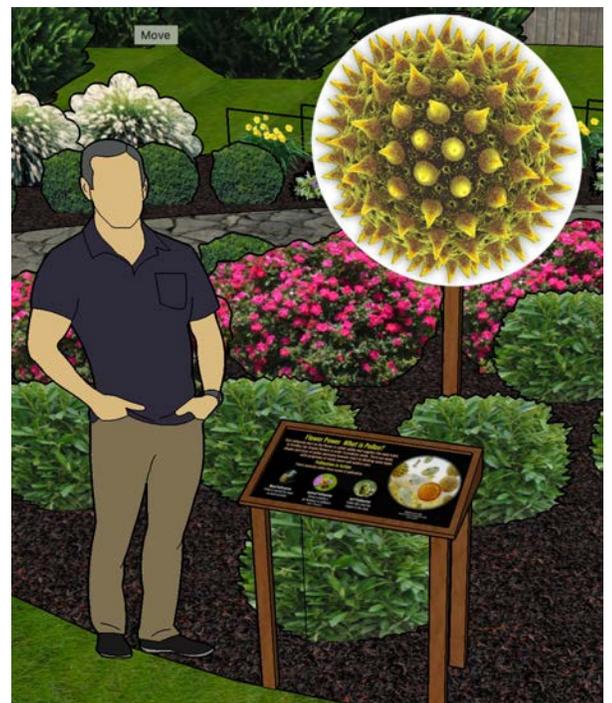
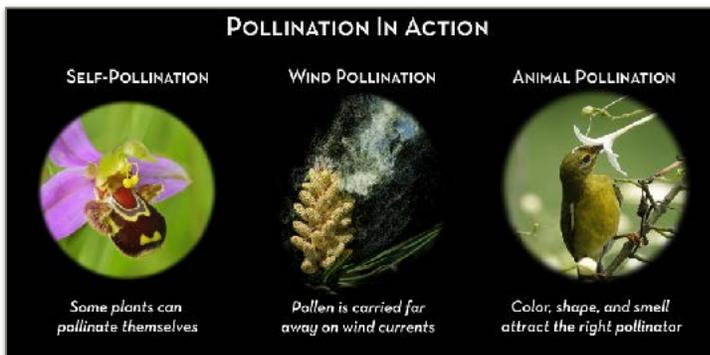
Five groupings with more than fifteen Spotlight graphics pairings are able to be placed throughout the grounds of your facility, to allow for flexible installations and independent learning experiences. An affordable and engaging addition to any programming initiative, this exhibit brings home important conservation messaging for visitors of all ages.

## Content Outline and Interpretive Messaging

### Grouping One: Introductory Area

A large banner (approximately 6 feet by 8 feet) greets the visitor and orients them to the overall concept. Topics covered include:

- **What is Pollination?** *Fun Facts and Data about the Importance of Pollination*
- **How Does It Work?** *Flower Anatomy and Elements of Successful Pollination With Spotlight Graphic Element*
- **What is Pollen?** *Macro View Spotlight Graphic Element*



## Grouping Two: Winged Wonders

Winged insects of all types play a crucial role in pollinating flowers as they fly from one blossom to another in search of nectar. This section shines the spotlight on the familiar butterfly, and also on the unexpected pollinator groups of moths and beetles.

### ELEMENTS

Overview Reading Rail; Detailed Topic Reading Rail

#### Spotlight:

**Butterflies** *Familiar and easy to observe, butterflies are active day flyers with complex relationships with plants of all kinds. Flower shape and color play an important role.*

**Moths** *Important pollinators, moths are varied in their life habits and not as easily observable, as most are active at night. Night-blooming flowers are their nectar source.*

**Beetles** *Beetles are the oldest group of plant pollinators, and are among the first insects to ever visit flowers.*



## Grouping Three: Marvelous Mammals

While the emphasis on pollination typically focuses on insects, there are many other types of animals that play a role in plant pollination. This section highlights mammals as one of those different groups of animals that are responsible for pollination, and tells some of their stories.

**POLLINATOR SPOTLIGHT: BATS**

DID YOU KNOW THAT OVER 500 PLANT SPECIES RELY ON BATS TO POLLINATE THEIR FLOWERS? THESE INCLUDE MANY SPECIES IMPORTANT TO HUMANS SUCH AS SOME SPECIES OF MANGOS, BANANAS, GUAVAS, AND AGAVE (USED TO MAKE TEQUILA). IN ADDITION, MANY DESERT CACTI RELY ON BATS FOR POLLINATION!

MEXICAN LONG-TONGUED BAT  
*Choeronycteris mexicana*

A photograph of a Mexican long-tongued bat with its wings spread, hovering over a cluster of yellow flowers. The bat's face is close to the flowers, and its long tongue is visible. The background is dark, making the bat and the bright yellow flowers stand out.

## ELEMENTS

### Overview Reading Rail; Detailed Topic Reading Rail

#### Spotlight:

**Bats** *Bats are pollinator specialists, which means that there are certain plants that are only able to be pollinated by specific bat species. Some examples of these plants include mango, some types of bananas, and agave plants.*

**Harvest Mice and Other Rodents** *Mice feed on the sweet nectar of their chosen plant, carrying pollen grains on their fur as they visit from flower to flower.*

**Humans** *Hand pollination takes place when natural pollinators are not able to complete the job. There are many reasons why people may need to pollinate in the place of other animals.*



## Grouping Four: Reptiles and Birds and Flies OH MY!

Many plants need highly specialized pollinator partnerships, while others take a more general approach to pollination. This topic is explored alongside other fascinating pollinator animal groups.

### ELEMENTS

#### Overview Reading Rail; Detailed Topic Reading Rail

#### Spotlight:

**Hummingbird** *These intriguing birds have a unique mechanism for getting the most nectar possible out of each sip from a flower.*

**Gecko** *Geckos have a small narrow snout and long tongue that allows them to feed on one of their favorite food sources: nectar.*

**Flies, Gnats and Midges** *The smallest known pollinator is a tiny midge, which is the only pollinator for the cacao plant. Chocolate production depends on pollination!*



## Grouping Five: The Buzz on Bees

While the European honey bee is arguably the most well-known of all bees, native bees, bumble bees, and other bee specialists are irreplaceable in the plant pollination story.

### ELEMENTS

Overview Reading Rail; Detailed Topic Reading Rail

### Spotlight:



**Honey Bee** *The most well-known bee species, honey bees are important pollinators and are not native to North America.*

**Solitary Bees** *Not all bees live in colonies. Many species of native bees are solitary.*

**Bumble Bee** *The heavy body of a bumble bee allows them to perform “buzz” pollination.*



## **SUMMARY: Conservation Corner: What Can You Do?**

Now that you've learned all about pollinators and their importance, what can you do to help? This section highlights the many conservation initiatives, organizations, and local activities that can be found to support pollinators.

### **ELEMENTS**

**Overview Reading Rail; Summary Reading Rail**



## **Specifications**

Eleven 12 x 24 reading rails  
Seventeen magnified, one-of-a-kind layered graphic panel presentations  
Flexible installation and application options  
Customizable

**Rental Fee: Call for Details**

**Availability: Spring 2022**

**Contact:**

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## Customizable

Outhouse Exhibit Services can create a custom, one of a kind Pollinator Story specific to your institution, region, or conservation initiatives. There is truly no limit to the fascinating information that can be presented to your visitors which can lead to meaningful and inspirational learning experiences.

The design parameters have been specifically created to build in flexibility for many different scenarios. The exhibit elements and storylines are at home in conservatories, where plants and their pollinators can be featured; butterfly enclosures, where the importance of winged pollinators can be the focus; or outdoor natural settings such as prairie restorations, hiking trails, or open air pollinator gardens.

**Case Study:** Outhouse created a seasonal installation for the Como Park Zoo and Conservatory in St. Paul Minnesota, utilizing an existing greenhouse structure for a pollinator-specific installation featuring live native bee habitats.

In addition to the main presentation, the multi-faceted nature of pollinator stories allowed us to continue the exhibit messaging through to both the Zoo *and* the Conservatory grounds with additional graphic installations, and a wayfinding “treasure hunt” built in to the design as well.



